"THE NAME OF THE GAME"

A PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY COMPARING GAMES WITH LIFE AND THE RELATION TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION

by

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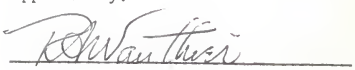

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INTRODUCTION

Man is searching the frontiers of space; he is plumbing the depths of the oceans of the world, seeking answers to the riddles of life. The theory of games is gaining importance and recognition because of its general applicability to situations which involve conflicting interests. Conflicting situations form the subject of economic, social, political or military discourse: This is Life...and "that's the name of the Game."

All of education is concerned with, and focused toward, the whole person--and all teachers are teaching ideally toward individuals who are prepared for better living of life. The physical educator works with the game as subject matter. The writer has attempted to analyze the relationship of games to the human, sociological experiences of life.

The views expressed here are none that one does not already know. It may be that one will be reminded of, or perhaps will transfer (or even possibly will disagree with) some perspective within this paper. This writing is an attempt to direct attention to things, though previously experienced, that have been possibly ignored or passed over. These ideas may appear simple and obvious...but as one usually discovers, the "simplest" things are not always the "easiest." The intent of this study is to "remind" ...and it proposes the important potential of emphasizing the relation of the game to life to the student. There may be some differences in aspects and opinions between the concepts of life and games yet it is desired to stress those aspects which they have in common.

Many authors, in discussing the relatedness of life and games, felt there was a strong relationship--and stressed the importance of games and play.

Following are quoted words of several authors:

According to Dewey,

> It is obvious that physical education activities are much superior to many, if not most, classroom experiences as subject matter for general education.[1]

Jennings seemed to feel that games help prevent conflicts, and stated,

> A game canalizes potential conflict--by bringing about interaction at high frequency but with rhythmic order imposed by the technique. Games thus prevent conflict--and provide one of the most important means of preserving equilibrium in a society....[2]

Angell linked games with a strong nation:

> There is not a doubt that the life of a nation is directly related to the games of its people. Give the child a chance to enjoy play well-directed, and the possibilities are greater for better men and women and a stronger nation.[3]

Bowen and Mitchell cited games as providing a common meeting ground:

> Games afford a common meeting ground where people of any race can find an interest. Certain games are prescribed for the different grades in school with the same definiteness that courses in reading or mathematics are mapped out.[4]

Haddon wrote about the universalness of games:

> Games...must be regarded, not as a conscious invention, but as survivals from primitive conditions under which they originated in magical rites and chiefly as a means of

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[1]Elwood Craig Davis (ed.), Philosophies Fashion Physical Education (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1963), p. 49.

[2]H. S. Jennings, The Universe and Life (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933), p. 504.

[3]Emmett Dunn Angell, Play (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1912), p. 11.

[4]Wilbur P. Bowen and Elmer D. Mitchell, The Theory of Organized Play (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1923), p. 362.

> divination. Based upon certain fundamental conceptions of elements of the universe, they are characterized by a certain sameness, if not identity throughout the world.[5]

Lister Sinclair, too, discussed man as expressing universally. The following words are from his short play, The Museum of Man:

> The museum of man is the world itself, and its exhibits are the world's peoples.
>
> What a piece of work is a man!
> How noble in reason!
> How infinite in faculty! in form, in moving,
> how express and admirable.'
> In action, how like an angel!
> In apprehension, how like a god!
> The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!
> and yet, to me, what is this...?
>
> Man is one single animal, with one blood and one nature.
>
> All the exhibits laid out to the life in all their dazzling diversity, show us, nevertheless, the forces that move all men, in spite of differences. They are the strings that pull all cultures, the universal axioms that regulate us.
>
> There is no place for Orthodoxy; for all are governed by these same overriding postulates that together make society.
>
> Of these universals, is life itself...[6] and the game.

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this report to emphasize the like interactions of a human in a game and a human in life--and subsequently, that the more able a person plays a game, the more able that person should live life.

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[5]Alfred C. Haddon, The Study of Man (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898), p. 176.

[6]Walter Goldschmidt (ed.), Ways of Mankind (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1954), p. 180.

This paper is about games and life--not a presentation of mathematical game theory. The theory and ideas are presented for empirical (as well as workable) purposes. It is an attempt to clarify, analyze, and determine features common to all games--and further, to emphasize the physical educator's strategic position and ideal training-ground for learning to live a better game.

After having taught, and having been taught, and having observed others, the writer was not completely satisfied with the benefits of the "game" as a tool of teaching. Therefore, an attempt will be made to show that life and game's relationship should be stressed and analyzed by the student as both theoretical and practical.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Life: as referred to in this report, will imply human living as social interaction between individuals.

Games: as used in this report, will refer to those activities taught by the physical educator (such as those activities included under any one of the general headings of individual and dual sports, team sports, games and relays, gymnastics and tumbling, rhythms, and aquatics).

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The voluminous amount of material that has been written about life and games makes it possible to include only a selected amount of material pertinent to this study. The references were selected according to the purpose of the report. It is realized that other material available may not agree with all views presented here.

METHOD OF STUDY

The views expressed in this report were compiled through a perusal of literature treating life and games (individually or comparatively). Cited were books, reports, and views on this subject that supported the proposed intent of this writing. The reading material used was taken from the Kansas State University Library, and from the writer's own personal library.

The material and views uncovered were synthesized as much as possible throughout the report. These philosophies were substantiated empirically (through observation) and stimulated by the writer's perception of the playing of games during teaching experiences.

DISCUSSION

LIFE

Create, survive, destroy; this is the main cycle of action.[7] Related to human life, the cycle becomes: birth, life, death; and, in general, for life and for the game, the cycle is: start, change, stop. Reg Sharpe, in his book This is Life, plotted the cycle as follows:[8]

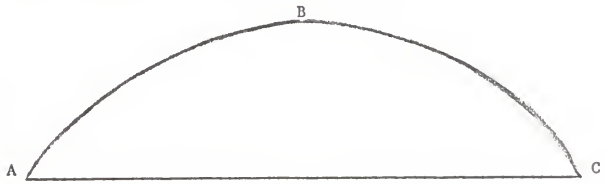

Figure 1

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[7]Reg Sharpe, This is Life (East Grinstead, Sussex, England: Hubbard Communications Office Ltd., 1961), p. 26.

[8]Ibid.

Point A representing birth, point B to represent the part where an individual is living to his fullest, and point C, death. In practice, of course, the line is different for each individual. It will have its ups and downs according to failures and successes, sickness and health, happiness and sadness. Just what is Life--and what is meant by a fuller, better life?

If it were expressed as in Figure 1, it would be to get point B higher and maintain the graph at the highest point for as long a time as possible.

What is the attitude or tone expressed by a fuller, better life? This was discussed in This is Life by an example of wanting an individual to do a job for you:

> First you find someone, and ask him to do it. Would you like him to respond with pleasure...with enthusiasm; eager to do the job; eager to do it well? Is there a better response?
>
> Unfortunately, we cannot always find people who are bubbling over with enthusiasm to help us, so sights are set a little lower. The next best thing is a response of strong interest--or mild interest at least. If he is interested in the job, you can have confidence in him and be fairly assured of a good job. Lower, you can find a person who is content to do the job. Down further, indifference and boredom; willing--but that is about all. You find that some of your enjoyment about getting the job done is lost. Getting still lower, you might find the type who is hostile to the idea--and expresses forcefully why he should not do the job. Then there is the angry temper who flies off the handle; but at least he has some display of energy. Next is the sulky type (resents being asked but can't say no). He grumbles behind your back but not to your face. Lower still is the man who is afraid to tackle the job. And then comes the one who bursts into tears at the mention of doing a job--certainly not much help. For the next individual, the job can't be done; a state of apathy. If we went any lower, such a man would be dead![9]

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[9]Sharpe, p. 27.

Thus, below is a scale of these tones, or attitudes:

Enthusiasm
Strong Interest
Mild Interest
Contentment
Indifference
Boredom
Expressed Hostility
Anger
Unexpressed Resentment
Fear
Grief
Apathy[10]

Sharpe discussed the implications of the above scale by pointing out that according to the scale, one would notice the attitudes above the line contribute to the achievement of the job; at the line (indifference and boredom) there would be little or no contribution or gain expected in the job; and below this point, the effort would be to stop the job from being done. This would be true with attitudes toward projects, games, work, and life. The top of the scale involves individuals excellent at any project undertaken; the middle group would be capable of some action but relatively average; at the low end of the scale, only minor action would be possible.

This would be observable not only for achieving performance of the job, but also for a person's health. The enthusiastic person would be rarely ill; a member of the middle-of-the-scale group would be occasionally ill and susceptible to usual diseases; while the person at the low section of the scale would be frequently ill. An interesting point for the reader to ponder: Would it be the person's good health that keeps him enthusiastic, or would it be his enthusiasm which keeps him in good health?

Thus it was explained by Sharpe that a higher position on the tone

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[10]Sharpe, p. 29.

scale produces a fuller life.[11]

According to Hubbard, for life to be best and most fully-lived, the individual must not only be alert in attitude but be expressing on all dynamics of living. He lists eight dynamics[12]...areas of life expression: 1. Self 2. Family (and Sex) 3. Groups 4. Mankind 5. Other Life Forms 6. The Physical Universe (Matter, Energy, Space, Time) 7. Spirit 8. Infinity. These dynamics are involved in varying degrees and combination when dealing with games. Dynamics one through six can be cited with easily-related examples, leaving dynamics seven and eight to the individual beliefs of the reader. Games deal with Self (dynamic 1) and/or with Groups (a small group which could be dynamic 2--or groups of three or more, dynamic 3). They may involve Other Life Forms (i.e. a tree to hide behind in "Hide and Seek"). The Physical Universe is utilized as: the time it takes to play, the space in which to move, the energy of moving and thinking, and matter (an example of which could be the equipment used to play a game).

Jennings, in his book The Universe and Life, expressed the following view of life:

> Life itself transforms, it develops, repeatedly and continuously it brings forth things that are new. Life moves in multifarious directions, yielding variety unlimited. It is progressing; it may be expected to advance--to heights that no one can predict, to which no one can set limits.[13]

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[11]Sharpe, p. 30.

[12]Ron L. Hubbard, The Problems of Work (Washington: Scientology Consultants, Inc., 1956), p. 67.

[13]H. S. Jennings, The Universe and Life (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933), p. 94.

It is only through living itself that one discovers what things in life are of value. For "performance [participation] is the only real basis for achievement."[14]

Jennings further described life as a continuous process in the practice of making decisions.

> Experiences which promote the fulness and adequacy of life is that which is valuable, and there is no other basis for the concept of value aside from its reference to life, no other basis for the notions of right and wrong.
>
> That which is to be done is right; that which is not to be done is the wrong; and the decision as to how any act is to be classified lies in its relation to the promotion of life.
>
> Value, right and wrong, and related ideas, have validity and meaning only with relation to life. Even so, for higher organism, with innumerable facets of life and relations with the outer world, the task becomes complex and difficult. Beneficial for one, may be harmful to another. With all organism, life is a continuous process of selecting one line of action and rejecting another.[15]

....And naturally, the more we practice, the better we are "able" to perform that which has been practiced.

The following is a view of Plato's, regarding life and living:

> What, then is the right way of living?
> Life must be lived as a game....

ELEMENTS OF GAMES

There are inevitably three common denominators, or conditions, essential if games are to be played: Freedom, Barriers, and Purpose.[16]

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[14]O. A. Battista, How to Enjoy Work and Get More Fun Out of Life (New York: Collier Books, 1962).

[15]Jennings, p. 70.

[16]Sharpe, p. 95.

Obvious is the fact that one needs an ascribed place in or on which to play the game. For basketball a court is needed, for chess a board is needed, and so on. Whatever the game one must have someplace to play it. Necessary are the obstacles of a game: opponents, rules, equipment and sometimes boundaries of the playing area. Obstacles are for interest and to make the game worthwhile playing. Some freedom, too, is needed within the barriers; otherwise, the game would have no "play". Finally, there is need for a purpose--an "object of the game".

It is interesting to note that if there were no barriers, there would be no freedom. The idea of being free brings the question, "Free from what?" By overcoming barriers, the purpose is achieved.[17] Similarly, if there were no freedom there would be nothing to bar. The playing field is part of the freedom and part of the barriers and at times, part of the purpose. For example, a sky diver scores if he lands on target (his field); a track is part of the purpose in a race--to run its length. Freedom of choice to play the game does not present itself until the game has been established. In order to establish a game then, the essentials are freedom, barriers, and purpose.

The quality of the game depends upon a balance of the three. If the barriers are insurmountable, there is no game because it follows there is little or no freedom; on the other hand, too much freedom would result in there being no game. A tennis court double the size and a net six inches high might be too easy. An archery target ten feet across (too big)--or if the distance from the target was only five feet (too close)--it would be, again, too easy. Barriers are to be overcome, not done away with.[18] The idea is not to remove life's

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[17]Sharpe, p. 94.

[18]Ibid., p. 95.

obstacles, problems, and responsibilities, but rather to infuse each individual with a play-motive (play spirit) that is strong enough to counteract the feeling of drudgery that is found not only in work, but even in the highest forms of play and art. The ideal game has the right balance of freedom, barriers, and purpose. The "right" relationship in the consideration of one player would not necessarily be so for another player. A player's abilities and desires affect the assessment. Thus, it comes about that some people like some games which others dislike and vice versa.

Enjoyment. Games in the popular sense of the word give us fun, pleasure and enjoyment. When anyone gets the idea he can no longer enjoy games, he is well on the road to succumbing, according to the book This is Life.[19] Gulick's definition of play is "what we do because we want to do it." Bowen and Mitchell stated, "It is basic to work toward development of play spirit."[20] More views were expressed on the subject of play spirit. Lamkin issued the opinion that play is the atmosphere of happiness which one should put around his work. "Play while you work, and work while you play."[21] These authors went further to say, "The enthusiasm of play, aroused as goals are sought and accomplished, gives to it the superior educational value it possesses.[22] It was stated in Battista's book that "success in the long run is a measure of one's ability to turn 'tasks' into adventure."[23]

Laughter. Sully stressed joy, stating, "Nothing, indeed, seems to

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[19]Sharpe, p. 95.

[20]Bowen and Mitchell, p. 65.

[21]Nina B. Lamkin, Play--Its Value and Fifty Games (New York: 1907).

[22]Bowen and Mitchell, p. 198.

[23]Battista, p. 233.

promote empathy more than the practice of laughing together. The level of learning, affinity, and family [group] affection rises when encouraged and allowed with reasonable freedom and laughter."[24] Pleasurable activity and laughter have physiological benefits (as well as psychological, sociological, and philosophical) as pointed out by Lamkin: "There is a buoyant and stimulating effect upon the nervous system and this reacts in a beneficial way on the whole body. The lungs are expanded, increasing circulation, developing muscles in power and agility, awakening and refining intellect."[25] Laughter itself has physiological benefits: vocal exercises (laughing being one) have long been a recommended method of strengthening lungs and furthering health of the individual organism as a whole. Laughter causes movement of limbs and body--a muscular exercise.[26] Bowen and Mitchell pointed out the relation between health and happiness: "Since the nervous system controls the chemical activity of the tissues, the reason for the profound effect of the pleasurable emotion on the whole body is readily seen...and the close interrelation between health and happiness is accounted for."[27] Play is one of the causes of laughter. Also, laughter is a form of communication; "a signal from one member of a group to others that 'all is well'--and they may relax from tension with safety."[28] Sully said of laughter, "He who produces a laugh of pure gladness brightens the world for those who hear him."[29] ....And Carlyle proposes

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[24]James Sully, An Essay on Laughter (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907), p. 417.

[25]Lamkin, p. 26.

[26]Sully, p. 34.

[27]Bowen and Mitchell, p. 204.

[28]Marie Collins Swabey, Comic Laughter, A Philosophical Essay (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 227.

[29]Sully, p. 417.

that "no man who has once heartily and wholly laughed can be altogether, irreclaimably bad." According to Gregory in his book The Nature of Laughter, "The act of laughing is not an act by...but within the body."[30]

Attitude. A poor balance of freedom, barriers, and purpose will take away the enjoyment for some people but there is also another aspect to keep in mind--the attitude of the players. Work may be performed in two ways--as play or drudgery--"the difference between them is nothing more than the attitude [play spirit] ...enthusiasm of the person toward the occupation in which he is engaged," according to Bowen and Mitchell.[31] There is less pleasure in playing with a bored or angry partner or opponent than with one who is enthusiastic. The emotional tone scale, indicated earlier, applies to games. "High-toned" people enjoy games much better than those who are low on the scale. Observable also, is the way in which the emotional tone level of players affects the tone of each other. An enthusiastic player can be pulled down to indifference if the other players are in apathy. Conversely, the enthusiastic player will put some of his fellow players up to higher levels. "The higher the average level of players, the more enjoyable the game."[32]

Participation. It is not necessary to win all the time. One tries to win but it is possible to play and lose yet to have thoroughly enjoyed participating. "The experience of the spectator is mild compared with that of the player--the reason the game should be played, not watched."[33]

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[30]J. C. Gregory, The Nature of Laughter (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1924).

[31]Bowen and Mitchell, p. 201.

[32]Sharpe, p. 96.

[33]Gove Hambidge, Time to Live (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1933), p. 67.

Hambidge wrote in Time to Live:

> Much as we need books, there is a wisdom they cannot give us; we must get it ourselves, directly, by contact with the earth and human beings and their activities. To keep the perceptions sensitive, eyes and ears open, mind alert and questing, emotions and bodies flexible and receptive throughout every day's experience....This is of even greater importance than reading books.[34]

GAMES AND LIFE COMPARED

Life presents all the necessary factors for a game. First there is a playing field, the whole physical universe--or--if preferred, just one's immediate surroundings. There are barriers such as solid objects, conventions, and laws. "The universe and all the earth's people function according to rules. The misfortunes...are the results of not following the rules."[35] Opponents are the rivals in life. There is freedom. Freedom to move within the barriers and freedom to participate to varying degrees. "One is free only within the boundaries of responsibility," according to Friesen.[36] To some it may seem there is little freedom but there is with everybody some degree of freedom: the most oppressed and tortured inmate of a prison is free to breathe--when that freedom goes the "game" ceases. Finally, there is purpose. "The highest purpose in this universe is the creation of an effect."[37] The effects take many forms and the purposes vary from individual to individual. Purpose, everyone must have, even if it is merely to get through the day without trouble.

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[34]Hambidge, p. 104.

[35]Jennings, p. 623.

[36]Walter Friesen of Kansas State University, from a mimeographed copy of a speech presentation to a fraternity conclave, September, 1966--"Excellence in Human Development."

[37]Sharpe, p. 96.

Other characteristics of a game in the popular sense were discussed on the previous pages as enjoyment, laughter, attitude and participation. These factors vary according to the balance of the three basic elements (freedom, barriers, and purpose) by either contributing to or taking away from the game.

A close parallel was drawn between life and games by Thomlinson.

> Many men stand out as credits to the game....Almost without exception they have not been the money grabbers or the players who kept one eye on the grandstands and the other on the headlines (They have been enthusiastic, and interested in playing the game). Americans may take a passing interest in the salary check a professional player receives...but the loudest acclaim is reserved for what he delivers in the field of play. That, it seems, is characteristic of all life."[38]

From the Emerson Essays: "The heroes of ancient and modern fame have treated life and fortune as a game to be well and skillfully played, but the stake not so valued but that at any time it could be held a trifle light as air, and thrown up." Broom and Selznick in their sociology text, devoted space to George Herbert Mead's perception of the child (from birth) relating play, games, and life:[39]

> The child first internalizes the attitudes of particular individuals, primarily his parents, toward himself. At this stage he does not have the capacity to participate in organized group life or to engage in complex, cooperative games governed by impersonal rules. Social interaction is limited to interaction with specific individuals, and behavior is largely determined by the child's experience with those who are not merely others but significant others for him. At this stage of development, his play consists largely of simple role-taking. He plays at being a mother, father, doctor, or postman. He re-enacts the behavior and attitudes of others as individuals.

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[38]William West Thomlinson, Time Out to Live (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1939), pp. viii-ix.

[39]Leonard Broom and Philip Selznick, Sociology (third edition; New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 108-109.

Thus indicating that the first learning of game play is imitation of how those around us "play the game." Mead goes on to say,

> The child gradually learns, however, a less-personalized, more complex form of role-taking as expressed in his developing ability to participate in organized games. In baseball, for example, it is not the acting out of a highly specific individual role that is required. The player adjusts his behavior from moment to moment, and does so in the light of what a number of others are doing and the rules and purposes of the game.

This quick-thinking adjustment was pointed out also by Bowen and Mitchell in The Theory of Organized Play: "Competitive life is a succession of games. One who is trained in games is therefore a quicker thinker and interpretor in the midst of a kaleidoscope life of moving persons and things."[40] Mead continued further to say,

> In performing his role, he (the individual) responds to a "generalized other".[41] One who takes the standpoint of the generalized other knows what is required to keep the group to its distinctive aims and rules. He sees not only his own role, not only roles of particular others, but the ways roles are related in determining the outcome of group activity. Gradually, the individual takes on the point of view of the community (life) as a whole.

This indicates that it is not enough to know two things relate (such as life and games) but that it is also important to understand how the relationship works.

Unfortunately for many, life is far from being a fun game; it seems a "battle"--a deadly serious business. These people do not have a good balance existing in respect to the three elements. Maybe their freedom is too restricted or too great for their liking; or it may be the barriers are too much for them. If they are lacking in purpose, then both the freedom and the

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[40] Bowen and Mitchell, p. 320.

[41] Mead used this term to designate "The organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self...."

barriers may be formidable. It is conceivable, according to Hubbard,... "that a mad person could be made well by simply getting him convinced that he has some purpose in life."[42]

The road of personal conquest is the busiest and most frenzied thoroughfare in the world. It is needed to remember the "time-out" option.

> Millions of life's students are driven through life without ever being privileged to sit for a time on a high hill overlooking the great procession of existence, there to get new bearings and a clear sense of direction.[43]

Thus, this better enables them to "get back in the game." Ovid agreed, some time ago: "The bow, if never unbent, will lose its power."[44]

IMPORTANCE TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION

First, education--in essence--means to draw out, from within. "...To 'know' rather consists in opening out a way, where the imprisoned splendor may escape, than in effecting entry for a light supposed to be without."[45] An old Arabian proverb says, "Four things do not come back, the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life, and the neglected opportunity." Like the star football player, one must grab each opportunity that comes within reach and run with it toward the goal line with all one's mind. Plato stated that "education should begin with the right direction of children's games. The plays of childhood have a great deal to do with the maintenance of laws." Every game is a training ground for citizenship--"A fall and rise/ A lose and win/ A jump up and try again. Another try--the try-again germ is the one which brings success out of failure and gives the world the greatest men and

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[42]Hubbard, p. 26. [43]Thomlinson, p. 138.

[44]Ovid, Heroides Epis, iv. 1. 91. [45]Lamkin, p. 34.

women".[46] Lamkin also stated that "every obstacle is a step to a higher class in life's school."[47] From Potter Stephen's book about gamesmanship, it is quoted, "The value of gamesmanship as a training for a citizen and for young people in particular, is shown in the special qualities it enhances among those who habitually find themselves on the losing side. The true gamesman knows that the game is never at an end".[48]

The physical educator knows that some of the West's most highly regarded standards are hammered out on the courts, fields, floors, and pools of physical education activities--under his superivision. His field lends itself to their being taught effectively. This view is supported by Davis, who stated, "Every gymnasium and schoolroom [game-ground] should be a laboratory where, aside from regular work, games and their value and effect on different temperaments should be a constant study".[49]

"Games lubricate the body and the mind," said Benjamin Franklin. The higher the performance, the greater the degree of self-discipline required. "Before the Gates of Excellence the high gods have place sweat".[50] The physical education lesson is one of doingness. Though the source of the following quotation is unknown, the words remain apt: "I hear it and forget/ I see it and remember/ I do it and I know!" Teachers are quite aware of the value of practice. In physical education the basic elements of life are practices in the playing of games. Martha Graham, of modern dance prominence,

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[46]Lamkin, p. 27.

[47]Ibid., p. 27.

[48]Potter Stephen, The Theory and Practice of Gamesmanship (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1948), p. 85.

[49]Davis, p. 76. [50]Ibid., p. 72.

The Game is Universal....The Game is Work....The Game is Love.... The Game is Life....The Game--must be played.

Many words of philosophy have been cited within these pages. For each, of course, comes his own conclusion. If life would be regarded by all as a game and if the barriers of life could be seen as part of the game and if people playing the game helped their fellows to enjoy and play the game better, what a wonderful civilization we could have. It is hoped that the reader can conclude in some agreement with the viewpoint of this report in that the physical educator (or any teacher of games) who says, "Here is a game, play it, learn about it, enjoy it", is saying in parallel about life, "play it, learn about it, enjoy it".

Of course, each reader formulates an individual answer, or thinking response, to Plato's posed question-and-answer that was cited in the introductory pages. Repeating those words of Plato, this report closes. "What, then, is the right way of living? Life must be lived as a game."

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"THE NAME OF THE GAME"

A PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY COMPARING GAMES WITH LIFE AND THE RELATION TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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The theory of games is gaining importance and recognition because of its general applicability to situations which involve conflicting interests. Conflicting situations form the subject of economic, social, political or military discourse: This is Life...and "that's the name of the Game".

The basic purpose of this report is to show life as a game by pointing out the basic elements common to both--and supportingly, to show that games taught by the physical educator are significant tools in learning to play the game of life.

This report was written with the realization that its information would have common familiarity to its readers; that it tells nothing that is not already known and generally agreed upon. However, the subject was chosen because it was felt that the benefits of learning to play games could be even greater, if the game...and life's relatedness was more emphasized and analyzed with the student theoretically as well as practically. It is hoped that this attempt to communicate and relate the basic make-up of life and games might remind and encourage the physical educator to greater useage of his strategic position and ideal training-ground toward learning to live a better life by playing a more knowledgeable game.

It was stated that only through living itself can it be discovered what things in life are of value. The basic elements of life, games, and their relatedness were discussed. The three basic elements of all games are freedom, barriers, and purpose. The quality of the game depends upon a balance of these three. The right relationship in the consideration of one player would not necessarily be so for another player.

Games in the popular sense of the word give us fun, pleasure, and enjoyment. A poor balance of the game elements takes away the enjoyment. The attitude or emotional level of an individual is important because that

level influences ability in participating. It is observable the way the players' emotional tone level influences each other. It was concluded that the higher the average level of players, the more enjoyable the game.

In comparing the two, it was found that life presents all the essential elements for a game. It was cited that from birth, people are involved in an integral and graded development of play and games which leads them "fit-ly" into group associations as adult citizens in the community and "world". Authors were quoted expressing the view that play of children is universal and has a great deal to do with the maintenance of laws.

The physical educator's importance was discussed. With the gymnasium and game-grounds as his laboratory, games and their value can be of constant study. The level of learning, affinity, and group affection rises when the student learns play spirit. Games teach the value of "doingness" and practice toward establishing habits, attitudes, skills, and knowledge. It was pointed out that to "knowingly" learn to play a better game can encourage the student's transition from an enjoyable, well-played game into an enjoyable, well-lived life.

It was concluded that the physical educator who says: Here is a game, play it, learn about it, enjoy it, is saying in parallel about life: play it, learn about it, enjoy it. Life--"that's the name of the Game".